

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA**

RODGER WILLIAMS,)
Plaintiff,) Civil Action No. 16 – 1284
v.) Magistrate Judge Lisa Pupo Lenihan
SUPERINTENDENT TREVOR)
WINGARD,)
Defendant.)

MEMORANDUM ORDER

This case is before the Court on Plaintiff's Motion for a Temporary Restraining Order or Preliminary Injunction (ECF No. 9.) In his motion, Plaintiff requests that the Court (1) order the Department of Corrections to provide more comprehensive mental health care at SCI-Somerset; (2) remove his Z-code status; (3) permit him to withdraw from violence prevention class without being penalized by the parole board; (4) prohibit the Department of Corrections from transferring him from SCI-Somerset; (5) prevent officers from filing frivolous misconducts against him, engaging in frequent cell and pat-down searches, and providing a negative recommendation to the parole board.

Temporary restraining orders and preliminary injunctions are governed under the same standard. The party seeking preliminary injunctive relief has the burden of demonstrating: (1) a reasonable probability of success on the merits; (2) irreparable harm if the injunction is denied; (3) that the issuance of an injunction will not result in greater harm to the non-moving party; and (4) that the public interest would best be served by granting the injunction. Council of

Alternative Political Parties v. Hooks, 121 F.3d 876, 879 (3d Cir. 1997); Clean Ocean Action v. York, 57 F.3d 328, 331 (3d Cir. 1995); Opticians Ass'n of America v. Independent Opticians of America, 920 F.2d 187, 191-92 (3d Cir. 1990). The Court should issue the injunction only if the movant produces evidence sufficient to convince the trial judge that all four factors favor preliminary relief. Opticians, 920 F.2d at 192 (citing ECRI v. McGraw-Hill, Inc., 809 F.2d 223, 226 (3d Cir. 1987)).

The purpose of the preliminary injunction is to preserve the *status quo* until the rights of the parties can be fairly and fully litigated and determined by strictly legal proofs and according to the principles of equity. Wetzel v. Edwards, 635 F.2d 283, 286 (4th Cir. 1980). Thus, the grant of injunctive relief is an “extraordinary remedy which should be granted only in limited circumstances.” American Telephone & Telegraph Co. v. Winback and Conserve Program, Inc., 42 F.3d 1421 (3d Cir. 1994) (quoting Frank's GMC Truck Center, Inc. v. General Motor Corp., 847 F.2d 100, 102 (3d Cir. 1988)), *cert. denied*, 514 U.S. 1103 (1995). The facts clearly must support a finding that immediate and irreparable injury will result to the movant if preliminary relief is denied. United States v. Stazola, 893 F.2d 34, 37 n.3 (3d Cir. 1990). The plaintiff bears the burden of establishing a “clear showing of irreparable injury.” Hohe v. Casey, 868 F.2d 69, 72 (3d Cir. 1989), *cert. denied*, 493 U.S. 848 (1989); ECRI, 809 F.2d at 226 (it is not enough to merely show irreparable harm: the plaintiff has the burden of showing immediate irreparable injury, which is more than merely serious or substantial harm and which cannot be redressed with money damages). Absent a showing of immediate, irreparable injury, the court should deny preliminary injunctive relief. Acierno, 40 F.3d at 655.

Moreover, in the prison context, a request for injunctive relief “must always be viewed with great caution because ‘judicial restraint is especially called for in dealing with the complex

and intractable problems of prison administration.”” Goff v. Harper, 60 F.3d 518, 520 (8th Cir. 1995) (quoting Rogers v. Scurr, 676 F.2d 1211, 1214 (8th Cir. 1982)). Where a plaintiff requests an injunction that would require the Court to interfere with the administration of a prison, “appropriate consideration must be given to principles of federalism in determining the availability and scope of equitable relief.” Rizzo v. Goode, 423 U.S. 362, 379 (1976). The federal courts are not overseers of the day-to-day management of prisons. Prison officials require broad discretionary authority as the “operation of a correctional institution is at best an extraordinarily difficult undertaking.” Wolff v. McDonnell, 418 U.S. 539, 566 (1974). Accordingly, prison administrators should be accorded wide-ranging deference in the adoption and execution of policies and practices that are needed to preserve internal order and to maintain institutional security. Beard v. Banks, 126 S. Ct. 2572, 2578 (2006); Bell v. Wolfish, 441 U.S. 520, 527 (1979).

With the above considerations in mind, Plaintiff has not demonstrated that a temporary restraining order or preliminary injunctive relief is warranted in this case. Plaintiff’s allegations in his Motion for Temporary Restraining Order bear no relation to the action pending, and, therefore, is an impermissible basis for seeking injunctive relief¹ as the issuance of a preliminary injunction is to preserve the *status quo* and prevent irreparable harm until the court has an

¹ See, e.g., Devose v. Herrington, 42 F.3d 470, 471 (8th Cir. 1994) (finding that because plaintiff’s motion was based on new assertions of mistreatment that are entirely different from the claim raised and the relief requested in the original lawsuit, they cannot provide the basis for a preliminary injunction); Spencer v. Stapler, No. 04-1532, 2006 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 50940, 2006 WL 2052704, *9 (D. Ariz. July 21, 2006) (denying plaintiff’s motion for injunctive relief because it concerns events that are unrelated to the subject of his complaint and concerns conduct of persons other than the named defendants); Westbank Yellow Pages v. BRI, Inc., No. 96-1128, 1996 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 6785, 1996 WL 255912, *1 (E.D. La. May 13, 1996) (determining that a preliminary injunction is not an appropriate vehicle for trying to obtain relief that is not sought in the underlying action); Williams v. Platt, 2006 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 3169, 2006 WL 149124, *2 (W.D. Okla. Jan. 18, 2006) (concluding that “[a] preliminary injunction would be inappropriate to address wrongs wholly unrelated to the complaint”).

opportunity to rule on the merits of the pending lawsuit. *See Acierno v. New Castle County*, 40 F.3d 645, 647 (3d Cir. 1994). As such, the Motion will be denied.

AND NOW, this 8th day of September, 2016,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that Plaintiff's Motion for Temporary Restraining Order (ECF No. 9) is **DENIED**.

By the Court:

/s/ Lisa Pupo Lenihan

Lisa Pupo Lenihan
United States Magistrate Judge

cc: Rodger Williams
ML-8889
SCI Somerset
1600 Walters Mill Roa
Somerset, PA 15510